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REQUEST FOR CONTINUED EXAMINATION (RCE) TRANSMITTAL

Subsection (b) of 35 U.S.C. § 132, effective on May 29, 2000, provides for continued examination of an utility or plant application filed on or after June 8, 1995.

See The American Inventors Protection Act of 1999 (AIPA).

| | |
|------------------------|-----------------------|
| Application Number | 09/472,989 |
| Filing Date | December 28, 1999 |
| First Named Inventor | Shunsuke INOUE et al. |
| Group Art Unit | 2674 |
| Examiner Name | A. Abdulselam |
| Attorney Docket Number | 00684.002946 |

This is a Request for Continued Examination (RCE) under 37 C.F.R. § 1.114 of the above-identified application.

NOTE: 37 C.F.R. § 1.114 is effective on May 29, 2000. If the above-identified application was filed prior to May 29, 2000, applicant may wish to consider filing a continued prosecution application (CPA) under 37 C.F.R. § 1.53(d) (PTO/SB/29) instead of a RCE to be eligible for the patent term adjustment provisions of the AIPA. See Changes to Application Examination and Provisional Application Practice, Final Rule, 65 Fed. Reg. 50092 (Aug. 16, 2000); Interim Rule, 65 Fed. Reg. 14865 (Mar. 20, 2000), 1233 Off. Gaz. Pat. Office 47 (Apr. 11, 2000), which established RCE practice.

1. Submission required under 37 C.F.R. § 1.114

a. Previously submitted

- i. Consider the amendment(s)/reply under 37 C.F.R. § 1.116 previously filed on March 15, 2004.
(Any unentered amendment(s) referred to above will be entered).
- ii. Consider the arguments in the Appeal Brief or Reply Brief previously filed on _____
- iii. Other _____

b. Enclosed

- i. Amendment/Reply
- ii. Affidavit(s)/Declaration(s)
- iii. Information Disclosure Statement (IDS)
- iv. Other _____

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110.00 OP

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2. Miscellaneous

- a. Suspension of action on the above-identified application is requested under 37 C.F.R. § 1.103(c) for a period of _____ months. (Period of suspension shall not exceed 3 months; Fee under 37 C.F.R. § 1.17(i) required)

- b. Other: Applicants petition the Examiner to extend the time for response for the Final Office Action dated December 15, 2003, for one month from March 15, 2004, up to and including April 15, 2004, and submit \$110.00.

3. Fees

The RCE fee under 37 C.F.R. § 1.17(e) is required by 37 C.F.R. § 1.114 when the RCE is filed.

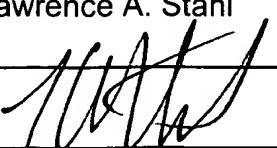
- a. The Director is hereby authorized to charge any deficiencies in the following fees, or credit any overpayments, to Deposit Account No. 06-1205

- i. RCE fee required under 37 C.F.R. § 1.17(e)
- ii. Extension of time fee (37 C.F.R. §§ 1.136 and 1.17)
- iii. Other _____

- b. Checks in the amounts of \$770.00 and \$110.00 are enclosed to cover the RCE filing fee and extension of time fee, respectively.

- c. Payment by credit card (Form PTO-2038 enclosed)

SIGNATURE OF APPLICANT, ATTORNEY, OR AGENT REQUIRED

| | | | |
|----------------------|---|--------------------------------------|---------------|
| Name (Print/Type) | Lawrence A. Stahl | Registration No. (Attorney/Agent) | 30,110 |
| Signature |  | Date | April 7, 2004 |

Burden Hour Statement: This form is estimated to take 0.2 hours to complete. Time will vary depending upon the needs of the individual case. Any burden hour statement you submit will be used for statistical purposes. Direct all correspondence to the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450. DO NOT SEND FEES OR COMPLETED FORMS TO THIS ADDRESS. SEND FEES AND COMPLETED FORMS TO THE FOLLOWING ADDRESS: Mail Stop RCE, Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450.